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You can rest assured that a large number of the more than one hundred student nurses who visited the Navy's famous hospital ship, U. S. S. Haven, in San Francisco last November 6th, came away greatly impressed with the "White Task Force."

The young women are studying at fifteen Bay Area hospitals. It was the first time any of them had been aboard a Navy hospital ship. The Haven, first hospital ship to return to San Francisco since the Korean war started, had given aid to 51,000 United Nations' troops in the year spent in the combat area.

All of the tradition and history of the 43-year-old Navy Nurse Corps unfolded before the wondering eyes of the earnest young students. They were escorted throughout the ship by one of the Haven's 23 blue clad Nurses.

What startled most of the trainees was the completeness of the floating hospital. Two shining, modern operating rooms located in the section of the ship which experiences the least motion while underway, and the large, completely equipped dental department attracted great interest. The students were shown the modern X-ray, sterilization and physiotherapy facilities. They inspected the vast wards which are capable of bedding nearly 800 wounded.

The nurses told the girls how at times the injured flowed through surgery at a rate of 25 per hour, around the clock from the Korean front.

They described to the students how the Navy needs more nurses to keep up with the front line needs.

They need the Angel-of-the-Crimes-type of women who are willing to spend grueling hours beside the doctor or patient... in the highest tradition of nursing.

The serious trainees learned that Navy nursing isn't all romantic liberty on foreign shores...with a whirl of dates with handsome young doctors. However, no doubt the nurses told the students that Japan and Hawaii were interesting, perhaps even romantic.

Navy nurses occupy a unique role in the all-male operations of the Navy. First, they are the only women who share the actual experience of combat. Second, they are the only women who sail with the fleet on combat missions. While today they only number some 3,400, there is unlimited need for more.

Interest in the Navy from among the girls was indicated by such questions as: "what are the requirements for the Navy Nurse Corps?" They were informed that first the girl must be a registered nurse, a graduate from a recognized school of nursing, unmarried and between 21 and 29 years of age.

Mary Ellen McGeehan, Chief Nurse of the Haven told the students that if accepted, they would be sworn into the corps as an Engin. "Would we be assigned to a hospital ship?" was the most frequent question. Lt. McGeehan replied, "first you will spend eight weeks in a Naval hospital for indoctrination. Afterward, the nurse can request duty with the 'White Task Force.'"